



SERVING VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN GUATEMALA

LEADERS IN ACTION

MARCH 2024

Working with vulnerable children in Guatemala, we face the reality that economic hardship and societal challenges loom large, and the youth we serve face formidable obstacles on their path to personal and academic success.

Growing up in environments plagued by violence, poverty, and limited opportunities, they often lack positive role models and viable pathways to a brighter future. At the Cadaniño Ministry, we understand the gravity of these challenges and the urgent need to do more than simply instill positive values in our students – we aspire to empower them to become leaders who can effect meaningful change in their communities and beyond. We realize that it's not enough just to tell our students they can do better; we need to help provide pathways and guide them in walking out what it means to strive for more in life.

While many of our programs are developed "in-house," we have limited time and resources, so we try to leverage outside resources whenever possible.

Recently, we have developed a working relationship with Fundación Genesis, a Guatemalan Non-Profit, that created programs to address these challenges.

Starting with a pilot program in 2021 with several students in our San Jose Pinula center, we have gradually expanded the program every year, and in 2023, a record-breaking 43 students from both centers completed leadership courses.

While we teach many of the same values in our Bible studies with students, this collaboration with a local organization has created a comprehensive framework that provides for leadership development, social skills enhancement, and life project planning which aligns seamlessly with our values, amplifying our efforts to empower each child in our program to reach their full potential and equipping our students with the tools, mindset, and support necessary to rise above their circumstances and challenging them to emerge as resilient, compassionate, and visionary leaders.



Cadaniño Leaders in Action Graduates

Students are placed in virtual classes with fellow students from all over Guatemala, which helps broaden their perspective. A teacher at each center keeps tabs on the student's assignments, working with the parents to ensure students take the program responsibilities seriously.

Here is what our students and teachers had to say about the program:

By Beverly, 17 years old.

"I want to share about the Fundación Genesis program and the courses I took. The Young Leaders in Action course focuses on values such as excellence, respect, empathy, self-esteem, and supporting people according to their needs. Throughout this course, we learned about the essential workplace skills, tools, and attitudes necessary to be an effective employee. I also developed better problem-solving and decision-making skills, which helped me build self-confidence; it has improved my communication skills and taught me practical tools for conflict resolution. I also saw beautiful results in my classmates as they put what they learned into action. One student was awarded a scholarship to a music academy, another student is now better at speaking in public, and two of my fellow students decided to give groceries to needy families. I am so grateful to have been a part of a program like this that supports young people, especially women, in their personal and professional development."

By Kimberly, 14 Years Old

"My experience of completing the Young Leaders in Action course was incredible. I learned many things, including loving and accepting myself as I am, which is important as

accepting myself as I am, which is important as sometimes we only focus on our flaws and fail to see our good qualities. I also learned what it means to be a good leader, whether in a workgroup, study group, or within my family. Being a good leader means being positive, giving constructive criticism, and accepting opinions and ideas from others so that we can work in a group where empathy, respect, and teamwork are practiced.

Due to my excellent grades and participation in class, completing 100% of the assignments, I was invited to the in-person graduation ceremony. At this event, I met many outstanding young people from around Guatemala and we participated in workshops that put into practice the skills we learned in teamwork and leadership.

This year, I am advancing to the next level called Citizen Leaders in Action. I hope to continue learning, growing as a person, and helping others be positive leaders who can impact the country and society by making positive changes in today's world."

By Alberto, 12 Years Old

For me, this course has taught new things; it helped me respect others and better understand that all people are equal and we all make mistakes. I learned not to discriminate against others because of their skin color or race, whether they are Ladinos, Quiches, etc. We are all equal and deserve to be respected and valued. I have had a great change thanks to the help of these courses; now I am a different teenager from those around me; I study, I try to support others, and give them the respect they deserve, and in the future, I want to be a person who does good for others.

I was impacted by seeing how the teachers supported us and wanted to know who we are. They showed us how we can be empathetic with others, and taught us values; I know that, thanks to this, I have improved. Now, I can be a better person with a better attitude who can work to change society and my environment."



By Jhoseline Pérez, Teacher

"My experience working closely with the students in the Leaders in Action was wonderful and I got to witness their transformation. Their perspective on the world and their interactions with others changed significantly as they progressed. I loved that the course built upon the values we teach at Cadaniño.

Many showed a newfound spirit of service and support, even within their families. Other students at the foundation noticed this change and approached me to ask about it. I shared with them how the course had influenced these students positively, which motivated them to enroll. Supporting these students has been incredibly rewarding, and it reaffirmed the importance of providing children and young people the tools, support, and motivation they need to make positive changes in their lives and communities."


At Cadaniño, we understand the importance of truly empowering those we serve. That's why we've partnered with organizations like Fundación Genesis to offer programs like the Young Leaders in Action course. Together, we strive to provide the youth we serve with the tools they need to identify their gifts and talents and learn what it means to use them to their greatest potential in a way that glorifies God. We amplify our impact through collaboration, enabling young leaders to overcome obstacles and make a positive difference in their communities today and in the future and it's incredible to see their growth, transformation and impact on their lives.

Sincerely, Timothy and Sharie Martiny

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Tax- deductible donations and can be given online at: www.guatemalamissionary.com

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